

**Liberia's WAYS Project Assessment:
July 1999**

by

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Contents

Acronyms	ii
Map of Liberia	iii
Recommendations	iv
Introduction	1
Displaced Children and Orphans Fund	2
Observations on the Situation	3
The WAYS Program	6
WAYS Projects	6
Gesellschaft Ternische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)	6
Sustainable Development Promoters (SDP)	7
Community and Human Development Agency (COHDA)	7
Children Assistance Program (CAP)	7
Don Bosco Homes	8
Calvary Chapel Liberia (CCL)	9
Observations on the WAYS Program	11
The Way Forward	13
Appendixes	i
Itinerary and Contacts	i
Project Profile—Support to War Affected Youths (SWAY)—October 6, 1999	iv

Acronyms

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CAP	Children Assistance Program
CCL	Calvary Chapel Liberia
CODHA	Community and Human Development Agency
DCOF	Displaced Children and Orphans Fund
GTZ	Gesellschaft Ternische Zusammenarbeit
ICR	International Rescue Committee
LCI	Liberian Children's Initiative
LWVF	Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
SDP	Sustainable Development Promoters
SWAY	Support to War Affected Youths
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WAYS	War Affected Youth Support Project



Recommendations

1. Training of war-affected children and adolescents should give more emphasis to literacy and numeracy, life skills (including HIV prevention), and other skills with broad applicability.
2. Interventions should also be designed to improve the social reintegration of trainees and to assist family reunification of marginalized children and adolescents.
3. Grantees, together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Education, should explore approaches that can reach marginalized children and adolescents not able to attend regular schools or full-time training. Such approaches include apprenticeships, part-time training over longer periods, community-based classes, and distance education.
4. Before any additional vocational skills training is initiated, a grantee should be able to demonstrate convincingly that a local economic demand exists for the skill in which the training would be done.
5. The Calvary Chapel Liberia (CCL) program and other War Affected Youth Support Project (WAYS)-funded programs should be carefully evaluated, and their keys to effectiveness and lessons learned should be carefully documented.
6. By the end of 1999, the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) should review the situation in Liberia and decide how it can most effectively support the protection and well-being of Liberia's vulnerable children.

Introduction

Liberia's civil war began at the end of 1989, when Charles Taylor led a small group of fighters into the country from Côte d'Ivoire. The government of Samuel Doe responded brutally along ethnic lines and drove many into the ranks of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Divisions soon developed with the NPFL and a number of factions emerged in different parts of the country. The Economic Community of West Africa sent a peace keeping force that was unable to impose peace and became another party to the conflict. Doe was overthrown and killed and fighting spread throughout the country. After numerous failed peace efforts, in May 1996 a shaky cease fire finally held, disarmament began, and in July 1997 Charles Taylor was elected the country's president.

The war destroyed most institutions of civil society, property, and productive capacity. An estimated 150,000 Liberians were killed. Of the total pre-war population of approximately 2.3 million, more than two-thirds were forced from their homes. An estimated 750,000 Liberians were internally displaced, and the same number of Liberians sought refuge in other countries.¹ Liberia's economy, which had been badly damaged under the Doe regime, was devastated by the war. During the war and its uneasy aftermath, donor assistance to the country has largely been for emergency response and humanitarian assistance.

The country's current population is estimated to be just under three million. At the end of 1997, over 480,000 Liberians were still outside the country as refugees, with the largest numbers in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that about half of these refugees returned to Liberia during 1998, and more continued to return during 1999.

Liberia's health conditions are poor, and much of the country's health infrastructure was damaged or destroyed during the war. UNICEF reports that the country's mortality rate for children under five years of age (260 deaths per 1,000 live births) is the fifth highest in the world. Immunization rates are low, and malaria is the most common cause of illness, accounting for over 40 percent of the country's deaths.

The war's impacts on children have been pervasive. The factions made extensive use of children as fighters and in support roles during the war. Many girls were kidnaped and taken as "wives" by fighters. Most children experienced displacement; fear; material deprivation; and loss of access to basic material resources, health services, and schooling. Many lost family members were separated from their families. Some children have been forced to turn to the street to survive, drug use has escalated, and the onset of sexual activity typically begins at younger ages.

¹ "The U.N. appeals for US\$91.9 million for emergency, reintegration and recovery initiatives for Liberia," United Nations Development program press release, December 23, 1996.

An estimated 30 to 40 percent of children of primary school age are in school. Enrollments tend to be higher in the north-central part of the country and the lower part of the western region while they tend to be lowest the southeast. Prior to the war, Liberia reported 82 percent primary school enrollment for boys and 50 percent for girls.² About 60 percent of the country's schools were managed by the Ministry of Education and 40 by churches or industrial concessions. The UNHCR-supported schools for Liberian children in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire were scheduled to continue through July 1999. It was anticipated that after that point many of these children and their family members would return to Liberia. Fighting in August 1999 along the border may limit the number who decide to return.

Under the joint UNHCR-UNICEF Liberian Children's Initiative (LCI) the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), which have been supporting schools for refugee children in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, have assisted 150 schools in Liberia with a combined enrollment of some 50,000. Funding was scheduled to end at the end of July 1999, but a one-year extension was proposed. The World Food Program has supported school feeding at each of the schools assisted through the LCI.

Displaced Children and Orphans Fund

The Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF) was established in 1989 by an act of the U.S. Congress and is administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The fund addresses issues of loss and displacement among the following three groups of children in the developing world: children affected by armed conflict, street children, and children orphaned by AIDS. The fund is supported by the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund and Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund technical assistance project.

In September 1994, USAID provided a grant to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the War Affected Youth Support (WAYS) Project.³ WAYS has been carried out through an agreement with UNICEF, which has established a series of subagreements with NGOs working in Liberia. The grant has been modified twice, with the more recent grant extending the program through December 1999. UNICEF has been authorized to spend a total of \$2,700,000 of DCOF funds through this program. As of June 1999, \$283,346 remained unobligated.

A two-person DCOF team visited Liberia from June 7 to June 16, 1999, to review current activities supported through the WAYS program, to assess current needs and problems among war-affected children and adolescents, and to recommend what interventions USAID might

² "The State of the World's Children 1990," UNICEF, p. 82.

³ Initially established in 1994, WAYS grants to UNICEF have been modified twice to extend the period covered, amounts provided and services supported. Following one of the modifications, UNICEF within the country began to refer to the Support for War Affected Youth (SWAY) program. Because official USAID documents have continued to use the original title for the program, WAYS is used throughout this report.

support after the end of the current grant. The team consisted of Lloyd Feinberg and John Williamson. Mr. Feinberg manages DCOF and the Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund (LWVF) within the USAID Global Bureau, Office of Health and Nutrition. Mr. John Williamson is the senior technical advisor on orphans and separated children for DCOF.

Observations on the Situation

Liberia is in a transitional period regarding both economic activity and donor support. The country's future is uncertain, and a great deal hinges on its ability to build a viable economy. Some positive signs have emerged. A good deal of economic activity is evident in Monrovia. Small-scale trade is becoming more active. An agreement that the government signed with the Firestone Corporation in June is an encouraging indication of some macro-level economic potential. Over 132,000 farmers, both former refugees and displaced people, received seeds and tools provided by the UNHCR.

However, the security situation continues to be uncertain in some parts of the country. The instability of the situation was underscored by a series of event that began in Voinjama on April 21, 1999. Following the alleged incursion from Guinea of a Liberian rebel group, the members of a United Nations food security mission were taken captive by a Liberian security force that stole their vehicles. Looting continued for the next two weeks, and a large quantity of food and assets of the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was stolen. In August 1999, in upper Lofa county about 100 people were abducted by a rebel group and eventually released and allowed to cross into Guinea.

Both development aid and private sector investments are likely to be limited for the foreseeable future. An inadequate response from the government to the Voinjama looting contributes to an already low level of confidence in the stability of the country and in the government's commitment and capacity to play a constructive role. In such an uncertain climate, significant private sector investment seems unlikely. The provision and continuation of development aid is also uncertain. Donors do not have confidence in the government or believe that peace has been achieved.

Liberia's principal resources are its people and the land, but its citizens are uncertain about the future and many question their own capacities. Local organizations appear to be looking toward outside aid as a solution, but outside aid is likely to decrease unless security improves and confidence in the government increases.

Addressing the needs of children and adolescents is strategically important to any possibility of a peaceful future for the country. Children throughout Liberia are highly vulnerable to recruitment if armed conflict begins again, and young women and girls remain vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. The only real hope in the immediate future for their protection is increased awareness, understanding, and commitment to child protection among families and communities.

After the cease fire, more than 21,000 fighters were demobilized between November 1996 and February 1997, 4,300 of whom reported themselves to be less than 18 years of age. Few girls were among the child soldiers demobilized. Although demobilization was carried out more than one-half year ago, family reunification and social reintegration are still issues for many children and adolescents formerly associated with factions. Agencies working in the country believe that many young women remain under the control of the men who abducted them. The demobilization was carried out with inadequate resources and support from the international community, but was, under the circumstances, surprisingly effective. However, some children and youth are not yet integrated socially. Some are “in the bush” or on the street—former fighters and young women and girls (many of whom have infants) who were taken as forced “wives” by fighters and remain under their control.

Schools and education are valued highly in Liberia and offer the hope of building a better future. Most of Liberia's primary-school-age children still lack access to primary school. Although the Ministry of Education must provide leadership, the availability of education for the next few years is likely to depend largely on community-level efforts to repair schools and to find ways to support teachers. Mobilization and strengthening of PTAs should be a fundamental strategy in increasing access to basic education.

Much of the population is difficult to reach and practically inaccessible during the rainy season. Inadequate roads and bridges are major barriers to development. Also, little information is available for planning rehabilitation and development interventions. It is important to monitor current activities and their impacts to provide a clearer picture of how the situation is evolving, what interventions have the best potential to improve child protection and well-being, and the nature of the current economic and social conditions.

“Orphanages” proliferated during the war, especially in the Monrovia area. Many of them are not only substandard, but have been set up to benefit the proprietors, not the children. Before the war, Liberia had only three residential care institutions. UNICEF estimates that the country now has 98 residential care institutions, with 72 in Montserado county (where Monrovia is located) alone.

Poverty is the main reason that most children are in institutions, not the absence of parents or extended family members. Institutional care of even a minimally adequate standard is much more expensive and less sustainable per child than care by families in communities. Institutional care does not adequately meet children's developmental needs and enable them to integrate into communities. The more places available in institutions, the more children will be pushed into them by families under economic stress.

With support from UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare hired consultants to carry out an independent assessment of orphanage and welfare institutions in Montserado County. Only six institutions were found to be acceptable to receive children in need of placement. In 4 institutions, children were in imminent danger; 14 homes were substandard and without essential items; 26 houses were ghost institutions that had been approved by the Bureau of Social Welfare

and did not function as residential institutions for children, if they functioned at all; 4 receive significant support from the president, ministries, international donors, or other sources, but were substandard; 14 were found to be below ministry standards but held a good potential for accreditation; and 3 institutions had food assistance withheld from them (the consultant recommended that such assistance be reinstated at all 3 institutions).

There is an urgent need for the ministry to establish and enforce firm policies on standards of care and criteria for admission. Many institutions should be closed, the situation of each institutionalized child should be assessed, and serious efforts should be made to reunite those children with parents or extended family members willing to provide care.

HIV/AIDS will become an increasing problem in Liberia. The dislocations, lawlessness, and breakdown of social structures and relationships have provided opportunities for the HIV virus to spread and have prevented any effective prevalence monitoring. Increasingly over the next few years, HIV/AIDS will burden the health system, undermine household economic coping, and create orphans. HIV/AIDS is going to have increasingly negative impacts on children and families, but it is relatively invisible at present because the country has so many other obvious and urgent problems caused by the years of armed conflict.

It is essential that the country take this threat much more seriously, and give a high priority to reducing the spread of HIV before it becomes more prevalent. It is also imperative to establish and implement effective policies and approaches that support family and community-based care and protection of children and residential institutions, including adequate standards of care, criteria for admission, and a monitoring system. Without these steps, it will become even more difficult to close residential institutions, and they will consume a disproportionate share of resources available to benefit children. Also, an increasing number of orphans will be pushed into residential care by economically strapped families.

There has been a resurgence in the “bush schools” of secret societies and other traditional institutions and practices. Some believe this is a response to guilt felt over people killed during the fighting who were not properly buried. The resurgence in female genital mutilation represents a serious health risk.

The WAYS Program

The WAYS program's services, which are overseen by USAID's Liberia mission, have been implemented by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), most of them Liberian. The program's services have reached children and youth with the following types of assistance:

- Supporting demobilization and social reintegration through psychosocial services;
- Referring war-affected youth to educational programs;
- Placing youth in transit homes while tracing and reunifying families; and
- Providing basic literacy training, vocational skill training, small enterprise development, and other income-generating services.

UNICEF reports that more than 4,5000 children and youth have benefited from training by WAYS. Through the program, 22 centers were established to provide vocational skills training, literacy and numeracy training, counseling, and support for family and community reintegration.

WAYS Projects

Brief descriptions of WAYS services are presented below. The amount of time the team was able to spend with each project was limited and many project sites were outside the areas where the team was allowed to travel. Comments, therefore, are not based on thorough assessments, but on the limited contacts possible, written information, and discussions with UNICEF personnel.

Gesellschaft Ternische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)

Duration: August 1, 1998 to July 31, 1999 (12 months)

Budget total: \$487,973

Major activities: Training centers have been established in southeastern Liberia in Zleh Town, Kanweaken, Pleebo, and Harper. A total of 549 trainees (346 males and 203 females) was receiving training in literacy and numeracy and such skill areas as construction, agriculture, tailoring, tie dying, fish net production, and furniture making. They were also receiving counseling support.

Comments: It was not possible to visit any of the GTZ training sites. From the information provided, it appeared that GTZ was providing good quality training of a short duration. Trainees were given the opportunity to engage in activities in all training areas before deciding which area they would concentrate in, providing a broad exposé but limiting the time spent learning specific technical skills to approximately three months. Apart from the WAYS-funded activities, its

standard training course in Liberia is 18-months long. The cost per beneficiary of the GTZ training was much higher than that of any of the other subgrantees—approximately \$1,220 each.

Sustainable Development Promoters (SDP)

Duration: June 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999 (7 months)

Budget total: \$48,029

Major activities: The project provides support for setting up small businesses to 460 young people who completed skills training at four sites in Bong County in 1996-98 during a previous sub-grant. Specific activities include distribution of toolkits and small grants, monitoring and on-the-job training, and four refresher workshops.

Comments: The team met with the general coordinator of sustainable development promoters but was not able to visit the work sites of former trainees.

Community and Human Development Agency (COHDA)

Duration: August 15, 1998 to June 14, 1999 (10 months)

Budget total: \$285,998

Major activities: COHDA runs two centers, one in Tubmanburg and one in Tienii. A total of 107 (61 male and 46 female) students ages 8-13 are in an accelerated academic program and 338 (230 male and 108 female) are in the vocational skills program. Vocational skills include shoe making, soap making, masonry, metalwork, tailoring, embroidery, carpentry, and agriculture. Counseling is also provided.

Comments: The team met with COHDA staff at their office in Monrovia but was not able to visit the training sites. They reported that 65 percent of their students in the older age group were former combatants. COHDA's primary recommendation was to extend the duration of training to 18 months.

Children Assistance Program (CAP)

Duration: August 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999 (8 months) for three vocational training centers and April 1 to July 31, 1999 (4 months) for the Promoteen pilot program

Budget total: \$346,090 (actual expenditures for the three centers) and \$54,700 for the Promoteen four-month pilot program

Major activities: A total of 370 students completed training at centers in Congotown and Virginia in Montserado County and Buchanan in Grand Bassa County. The major skill areas covered by

these centers included furniture making, building trades, auto repair, tailoring, home economics, cosmetology, agriculture, blacksmithing, and shoemaking. In addition, at the Promoteen center in Monrovia 25 teenage mothers were in a residential training program at the time of the team's visit. Literacy and numeracy training, business education, and counseling services were also provided.

Comments: The team visited the Promoteen center in Monrovia and in Buchanan, where some of the vocational training graduates who had been grouped were trying to establish small businesses. It was not clear whether a short-term residential program was going to make a significant difference in the lives of unskilled young women and girls once they returned to their communities. The team did not have sufficient time to make definitive assessments of the economic viability of the small businesses visited.

Don Bosco Homes

Duration: March 1 to December 31, 1999 (10 months)

Budget total: \$259,553

Major activities: A total of 479 trainees (268 males and 211 females) was in the program at training centers in Kakata, Tappita, and Zwedru at the time of the visit. Skill areas for training included sewing, agriculture, masonry, rattan craft, carpentry, pastry making, and soap making. Literacy and numeracy is part of the training, and counseling, family reunification, and community reintegration are program components.

Comments: The team was not able to visit the training centers but did meet with Don Bosco staff in their Monrovia office. Staff reported that follow up with graduates indicated 87 percent were in gainful employment (25 percent are self-employed), 10 percent were engaged in additional training, and 3 percent were unemployed. Staff thought that their training was reaching the saturation point in practically all trades in Monrovia but that needs and economic opportunities in Kakata and Tappita would be beneficial. The staff also said they were increasingly seeking to promote community ownership and participation in the training efforts. Community support and a sense of ownership has been stronger at the center in Tapeta than at the center in Kakata. A group of approximately 70 persons who came from a "marine base" in Kakata appeared very disturbed when they began the program. Participation in the training program and the group dynamic contributed to trainees' psychosocial rehabilitation. Mixing trainees who had been in different factions has not caused problems.

Calvary Chapel Liberia (CCL)

Duration: March 1, 1999 to September 30, 1999 (7 months)

Budget total: \$250,806

Major activities: A total of 372 war-affected youths (192 males and 180 females) has participated in the program. The CCL program differs from the other, vocationally oriented training activities of other subgrantees. Its participants are considered to be either “hard-core” former combatants or girls who had been abducted by factions. CCL has homes in Cestos, Buchanan, and Morweh in Grand Bassa and Rivercess Counties. The goal of the program is family and community reintegration, and the residential stay is transitional—six weeks for boys and three months for girls. CCL works with the families of origin and foster families as well as with young people. Agricultural skills training is part of the program for boys and baking, tie-dying, and tailoring are parts of the program for girls. These are highly structured residential programs. Reproductive health, including information on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, is another area of training. Older community members are invited to discuss traditional values and the ways of behavior with participants who grew up with war.

Comments: About 65 percent of the graduates were reported to have been reunited with their families and 35 percent were living in foster homes. Efforts were being made to arrange family reunification for the latter group. CCL staff members hold monthly support group meetings with parents and also with graduates, and they make follow-up visits to their homes. Young people from various countries and different factions have participated together in the program. Participants have been recruited from the bush or the street by CCL staff and increasingly by graduates of the program. Many participants originally came from Nimba, Bong, Margibi, and Montserrado Counties and have returned to these areas after passing through the program. The program has a very strong religious orientation.

Table 1 provides an overview of the number of WAYS trainees from each project. Only approximate figures were available at the time of the visit. UNICEF, who provided the figures for the table, dated the figures from October 6, 1999.

Table 1: WAYS Participants

Organization	Student Level	Boys	Girls	Total
GTZ	Graduates	62	30	92
	Trainees	284	161	445
Sustainable Development Promoters	Graduates	379	298	677
	Trainees	-	-	-
Community and Human Development Agency	Graduates	238	83	321
	Trainees	336	421	757
Children Assistance Program	Graduates	260	518	778
	Trainees	not available	not available	570
Don Bosco Homes	Graduates	187	150	337
	Trainees	325	212	537
Calvary Chapel Liberia	Graduates	552	420	972
	Trainees	48	90	138
Subtotal	Graduates	1,678	1,499	3,177
	Trainees	not available	not available	2,446
Total Participants				5,623

Observations on the WAYS Program

The total of 5,623 WAYS participants falls considerably short of the target of 10,000 set in the grant modification of September 1998, but, nonetheless, represents a significant achievement in the difficult context of Liberia. In addition to the unstable security situation, particularly in Upper Loffa, access to many project sites has been more difficult than had been anticipated because infrastructure repair envisaged under the national reconstruction plan has not been carried out. Of the 3,177 WAYS graduates, many are participating in the 381 business groups that have been formed with the support of WAYS and its partners, and 806 have returned to mainstream schools.

WAYS training activities appear to have benefitted participants by providing a structured learning environment and caring attention from adults, which have, in turn, facilitated participants' social integration. With the exception of the results reported by the Don Bosco project, it has not yet been demonstrated whether vocational skills training, which has been the main type of activity supported through WAYS, has actually led to viable self-employment or jobs. An evaluation report in December 1997 indicated that only two percent of the graduates had obtained employment and recommended several measures to improve the program's economic impacts. These recommendations were taken into account in the subsequent modification of the agreement, which provided for grants and toolkits to be given to groups of graduates organized into cooperatives of four or five persons each. Each group is to receive two \$50 grants through the Trickle-Up program.

The team did not have enough time to make definitive judgements about the extent to which these additions to the program have been effective, but the team's impression was that although the success rate may have been improved, it remains relatively low. UNICEF has attempted to procure, assemble, and distribute to subgrantees toolkits that would enable them to use the skill in which they have been trained, but its procurement capacity has not been up to the task. Graduates and subgrantees complained that only part of the tools needed have been distributed. Also, it is questionable that the limited Trickle-Up grants will be sufficient and effective in enabling trainees to establish and manage business that will be able to sustain them. The level of technical analysis and support provided by Trickle-Up appeared to be limited.

Enabling youth to become self-employed is a difficult undertaking, even in a much better economic environment. In Liberia's economic circumstances, a high rate of failure is more than likely, especially among those organizations that have not previously done vocational training or business development. UNICEF plans a more detailed evaluation next month, which should provide some measure of the overall rate of economic viability among the businesses being established.

Although most of the grantees have focused on vocational skills training and achieved some success with social reintegration as a by-product, others have emphasized social reintegration and

family reunification. The Calvary Chapel of Liberia (CCL), however, has concentrated on the family reunification and social reintegration of hard-core former fighters who have continued to live in the bush or on the street. The CCL has focused on former fighters and girls abducted to be “wives” of fighters during the armed conflict. Many of these young women have infants or young children or are pregnant. Other organizations have included a significant proportion of former fighters and “rebel wives,” but CCL has focused exclusively on this group. CCL counselors reported that most of the boys who have graduated returned to live with their families, that those who have not graduated are in foster homes, and that CCL is still working to reunite the latter group with their families. CCL appears to have addressed a different and more achievable goal than other subgrantees and may have produced longer-term impacts. The Don Bosco Homes have also worked on tracing and family reunification, as well as involving communities in their centers.

The need among war-affected young people to earn a livelihood is clear, and to the extent that viable, affordable ways to achieve this can be identified, the program should pursue them. However, it is highly questionable whether in a context where cheap imported items are available, such skills as soap making, tie dying, tailoring, tinsmithing, and furniture making are the basis of profitable businesses, particularly among young people, most of whom are illiterate and have no experience in running a business. The odds against these skills leading to self-support are high.

Apprenticeships are an approach to training that grantees should explore, both for primary training and as a way to enhance the skills that trainees have already learned. Placing young people in the marketplace could increase the likelihood that training will produce marketable skills. A recent UNICEF conference of Liberian youth identified vocational skills as something they want but specified basic education as a more fundamental need. Literacy and numeracy have been included in WAYS training, but have been secondary to vocational skills. Literacy and numeracy are fundamental skills that trainees could be able to apply in whatever field they may be able to find employment. It would make sense to give much greater emphasis to training in these areas.

The social integration of trainees might be achieved more effectively through actively involving communities in finding solutions, counseling, and organizing activities focused on this goal. This could include community projects, leaders and elders making presentations to trainees and interacting with them, and life skills training. The inadequate or distorted socialization of young people during the war helped to fuel the fighting, and it is important to address this issue of socialization now in the interest of building peace. Also, better social integration of marginalized and poorly socialized young people can improve their prospects for finding ways to support themselves.

CCL, Don Bosco, and perhaps other grantees have achieved some success in reuniting war-affected children and young people with their families and reintegrating them into communities, which is particularly difficult and important for those who have been living in the bush or on the street.

The Way Forward

WAYS grantees have developed significant training capacity, and it should be redirected into skill areas where needs are high and where a higher likelihood of success is offered. Literacy and numeracy skills are fundamental and broadly applicable.

The Ministry of Education's Accelerated Learning Program is supposed to go to scale in the coming school year. It is intended to help 8-15 year olds, who missed educational opportunities because of the war, to catch up in core academic subjects. However, it does not reach children beyond age 15, and many 16 and 17 year olds have not had the opportunity to even achieve basic literacy. Neither can the Accelerated Learning Program be expected to reach all who need it within the 8-15 year old target group. Additional literacy and numeracy training will be needed, and such training could be coupled with life skills training, including traditional values training regarding family and community roles and responsibilities, basic health, sexual and reproductive health (including prevention of STDs and HIV infection).

With regard to vocational skills, in the current uncertain economic situation, it makes sense to build on the strengths that Liberia has—its land and its people. Agricultural offers the most viable option as an area for training, but it is relevant only in those areas where skills appear to offer the most viable option for achieving self-support.

Liberia also needs to rehabilitate war-damaged structures. Depending on the availability of aid for such rehabilitation and the country's economic evolution, repair and construction skills in carpentry and masonry may offer livelihood possibilities. Road and bridge repair and maintenance are skills that are also much needed in the country, but WAYS has not conducted formal training in these areas. The International Labor Organization has published materials for use in training labor-intensive road construction that might be used for programming in this area.

It is important to evaluate carefully and document the extent to which WAYS activities have been successful in achieving family reunification, social reintegration, and psychosocial well-being among children and adolescents formerly associated with factions. The lessons would be valuable not only for Liberia but also for Sierra Leone and other countries struggling with similar problems.

In the current limbo between peace and war, donor funding in Liberia is likely to decline. WAYS partners need to reorient themselves from an exclusive dependence on external funding toward increasing their own sustainability. Such a reorientation could involve identifying and building on national and community resources, lowering operating costs, finding ways to collaborate with other organizations or ministries to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and organizing agricultural or other training efforts to produce some income.

Liberia is in a transitional period, and it is not clear what specific kinds of interventions will be most effective in improving the protection and well-being of especially vulnerable children and

adolescents. USAID's fundamental strategies in this area must be to build the capacities of families, communities, and young people. The WAYS program is to be audited and evaluated in July. UNICEF and SCF/UK are each preparing to carry out situation analyses as part of their respective planning exercises, each of which should produce a better picture of conditions, needs, problems, and opportunities in Liberia by the end of 1999. With this information, USAID should be in a position to make well-informed decisions on how best to direct any additional funding to benefit war-affected children and youth.

Appendixes

Itinerary and Contacts

Date	Activity and Location	Participants
June 7	Arrival in Monrovia	Lloyd Feinberg (LF) and John Williamson (JW)
8	Discussions at USAID mission	USAID mission staff - Minnie Wright (MW), Program Officer; Dr. Adams Lincoln (AL)
	Presentation and discussion at UNICEF office	UNICEF staff - Scholastica Kimaryo, Representative; Elizabeth Hughes; Ennio Cufino, Program Coordinator; Dr. Juan Ortiz-Truri, Section Chief, Health, Nutrition, Water, & Environmental Sanitation; Bernard Gatawa, Project Officer/Education; Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda, Child Protection Officer; MW, AL, LF, JW
	Luncheon with members of the Eminent Persons Group at Panache Restaurant	Amos Sawyer, Ruth Perry, Theresa Leigh-Sherman, MW, AL, LF, JW
	Visit to the Promoteen project of CAP	CAP staff - Jamesetta Howard, Chairperson; H. Welh Jargbah; LF, AL, JW
	Discussion at IRC office	IRC staff - Edward Kibirige, Country Director; Charles Kaften, Deputy Country Director; LF, JW
9	Discussion at Don Bosco office	Don Bosco staff - Joe Glackin, Program Director; S. Alfred Gamba, Project Coordinator; Richard Goodlin, Training Coordinator; LF, JW
	Discussions at UNICEF office	Anthony Hubbard, Assistant Minister of Social Welfare; LF, JW
		Mr. Gatawa, LF, JW
		Dr. Ortiz; Dr. Angela Benson, Project Officer, Women's Health; JW
	Visit to Benedict Menni Orthopedic Center	Benedict Menni staff, LF
	Discussion at World Health Organization (WHO) office	WHO staff - Dr. Evelyn Izaacs, Acting Representative; Lousie Thomas Mepleh, Reproductive Health Advisor; HIV/AIDS Control Program staff; Hawa M. Johnson, Deputy Manager; Dr. Ortiz; Dr. Benson; JW

	Discussion at SCF/UK office	SCF/UK staff - Jane Gibreel, Country Director; Cornelius Williams, Program Manager, Social Welfare; LF, JW
10	Travel to Buchanan	Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, LF, AL, JW
	Visits to enterprises of CAP trainees	Daniel Williams, CAP Site Supervisor; Ms. Hughes; Dr. Ortiz; LF, AL, JW
	Visit homes of clients with mobile community based rehabilitation (CBR) team	CBR staff, Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, LF, AL, JW
	Discussion with CCL and local officials	Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, LF, AL, JW
	Visits to Sarah's Daughters and Jacob's Brothers residential program sites	CCL staff - Roseanne Shack, Program Director, G. Moses Floe, Site Coordinator; Ms. Hughes; Dr. Ortiz; LF, AL, JW
	Return to Monrovia	Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, LF, AL, JW
11	Discussion at COHDA office	COHDA staff - Abdallah S.V. Jaleiba, Executive Director; Andrew Foday,WAYS Project Coordinator; LF, JW
	Discussions at UNICEF office	Ministry of Education - Deputy Minister Peter Ben, Trokun B. Wayne, Coordinator, Accelerated Learning Program; Mr. Gatawa; LF, AL, JW
		George Sabeh, General Coordinator, Sustainable Development Promoters; LF; JW; AL
		UNHCR staff - Mette Nordstrand, Education Coordinator; Caroline van Buren, Senior Protection Officer; Olivier Fafa Attidzah, Senior Programme Officer; LF; JW
	Discussion at UMCOR office	Ernest Hayes, Country Director; LF, AL, JW
	Presentation and discussion at GTZ office	GTZ staff - Ferdinand Takatsch, Project Manager; David Saingbe, Training Coordinator; Angela Schwaz, Assistant Project Manager; LF, AL, JW
12	Travel to Ganta	Minister Peter Coleman, Minister of Health; Ms. Hughes; Dr. Ortiz; LF, JW
	Visit to Ganta Hospital and discussion	Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, LF

	Discussion at IRC office	Tatiana Garkani, Project manager, IRC; JW
	Return to Monrovia	Minister Peter Coleman, Minister of Health; Ms. Hughes; Dr. Ortiz; LF, JW
	Dinner at Minnie Wright's house	Mamadou Mbaye, Officer-In-Charge, World Food Program; Esther King-Lincoln; LF, MW, AL, JW
13	Discussion at SCF office	Ms. Gibreel and Mr. Williams, LF, JW
15	Debriefing with UNICEF staff	Ms. Kimaryo, Ms. Hughes, Dr. Ortiz, Mr. Gatawa, Ms. Gumbonzvanda, LF, AL, JW
	Discussion at European Union office	Werner Panhaus, LF, AL, JW
	Debriefing with WAYS NGOs at UNICEF office	Representatives of CAP, GTZ, SDP, COHDA, CCL, DB; Ms. Kimaryo; Ms. Hughes; Dr. Ortiz; Mr. Gatawa; Ms. Gumbonzvanda; LF, AL, JW
	Discussion at office of Dutch Relief and Rehabilitation Agency	Ben Terlouw, psychologist; JW, AL
16	Discussion at office of United Nations Development Program	Gladis Ezeibe, Project Manager, Trickle Up; Wesley Jlué, Administrative Assistant; AL, JW
	Discussion at UNICEF office	Ms. Hughes, LF, AL, JW
17	Departure from Monrovia	LF, JW

Project Profile–Support to War Affected Youths (SWAY)–October 6, 1999

Partner	Project Sites	Activities	Total Enrollment	Remarks
Calvary Chapel PARTNER	Buchanan, Bassa Co., Morweh, Bassa Co., Cestos, Rivercess Co.	Vocational skills/literacy training (agriculture, baking, tailoring, tie & dye, soaping making, cosmetology) foster care, counseling, training in childcare and basic health care.	Graduates 972 (420 F, 552 M) Mainstreamed 583 (237F, 346 M) Business groups 29 Buchanan 54 (30 F, 24 M, 25 babies) Morweh 42 (30 F, 12 M, 23 babies) Cestos 42 (30 F, 12 M, 20 babies) Total 138 (present enrollment)	Corporate agreement expired 30 September 1999. Graduation activities to be held October 1999.
CAP	Virginia, Montserrado Co., Congo Town, Montserrado Co., Buchanan, Bassa Co.	Vocational skills/literacy training (auto trade, building trade, cosmetology, pastry/food preservation, tailoring, shoe making, furniture, home economic, agriculture, literacy and black-smithing), business skills/income generation and counseling.	Graduates 778 (518 F, 260 M) Mainstreamed 27 Business groups 134 Virginia 110 Congo Town 424 Promoteen 36 (36 F) Total 570 (present enrollment)	Corporate agreement expires 31 December. Although the Buchanan site is closed, reintegration activities on-going.
COHDA	Tienii, Cape Mount Co., Tubmanburg, Bomi Co.	Vocational skills/literacy training (agriculture, masonry, soap making, metal works, shoe making, tailoring, carpentry), business skills/income generation and counseling.	Graduates 321 (83 F, 238 M) Business groups 45 Tienii 384 (252 F, 132 M) Tubmanburg 373 (169 F, 204 M) Total 757 (present enrollment)	Corporate agreement expired 30 September 1999. Graduation activities is to be held in October 1999.
Don Bosco	Kakata, Margibi Co., Tappita, Nimba Co., Zwedru, Grand Gedeh Co., Duala, Montserrado Co.	Vocational skills/literacy training (agriculture, carpentry, masonry, sewing, pastry, rattan furniture, soap making), business skills/income generation and counseling.	Graduates 337 (150 F, 187 M) Business groups 68 Kakata 138 (59 F, 79 M) Tappita 301 (113 F, 189 M) Zwedru 40 (40 F, 25 babies) Duala 57 (57 M) Total 536 (present enrollment)	Corporate agreement expires 31 December 1999.
GTZ	Kanweakan, Grand Gedeh, Zleh Town, Grand Gedeh, Co., Harper City, Maryland Co., Pleebo, Maryland Co.	Vocational skills/literacy training (agriculture, masonry, carpentry, tie & dye, tailoring, black smithing), business skills/income generation and counseling.	Graduates 92 (30 F, 62 M) Zleh Town 182 (84 F, 98 M) Harper City 123 (30 F, 93 M) Pleebo 140 (47 F, 93 M) Total 445 (present enrollment)	The Kanweakan site graduation was held in September. Center is presently closed to training activities. Corporate agreement expires January 2000.
SDP	Gbarnga, Bong Co. Zoweinta, Bong Co, Totota, Bong Co., Samay, Bong Co	Reintegration activities and counseling.	Graduates 677 (298 F, 379 M) Business Groups 105 (234 F, 226 M) Mainstreamed 196 (117 F, 79 M)	--